Saskatchewan
Education

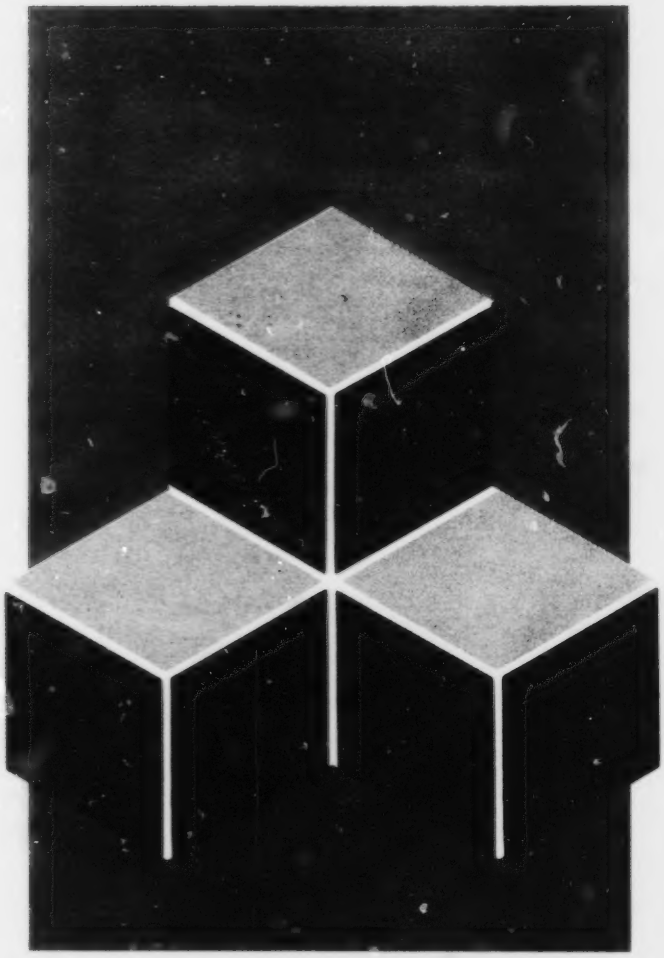
Hon. Lorne H. Hepworth
Minister

"A NEW BEGINNING"

A BACKGROUND PAPER ON

ADULT ILLITERACY AND UNDEREDUCATION

IN SASKATCHEWAN



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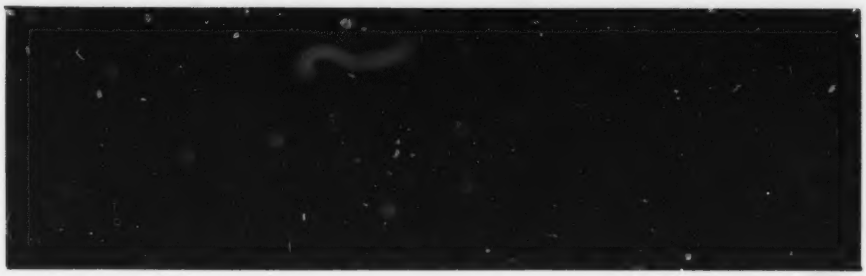

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IN SASKATCHEWAN

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Department of Education

June, 1987

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
	Executive Summary	i
	Terms Used	iv
I.	EXAMINING THE ISSUE	1
	The Literature and the Definitions	1
	Size and Scope of the Problem	6
	Who is Affected and How?	8
	Economic Loss	12
	Human Cost	17
II.	THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT	20
III.	WHAT CURRENTLY EXISTS	23
	Basic Literacy (Grades 1-4)	23
	The Number of Programs	24
	Who Attends?	27
IV.	CONCLUSION	29
	Implications	31
V.	AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	32
	A Basic Education Campaign	33
	Community Education Centres	34
	Professionalized CORE Programs	36
VI.	A CONCLUDING NOTE	38

Executive Summary

Illiteracy has been termed a "silent enemy in our midst." Its origins and effects have been poorly understood through history. Its effects have been under-emphasized and "solutions" to "resolve" illiteracy have typically been over-simplified and unsustained. The issue has been in the Saskatchewan midst for many years. Today, Saskatchewan has the highest functional illiteracy rate in Western Canada with 24.7% of the province's adults over fifteen years of age with less than a grade nine education.

At an October, 1986 post-secondary education conference, Leadership 2000, illiteracy was named as one area needing decisive action. Following a series of twenty province-wide consultation meetings, on April 28, 1987 the Minister of Education, the Honourable Lorne Hepworth, announced that a provincial literacy campaign would be undertaken and that a Literacy Council would be established to co-ordinate and lead this campaign. He also announced he would advocate a National Campaign Against Adult Illiteracy.

This background paper examines the literature in this area in terms of definitions, size of the problem, who is affected and how. The intent of this paper is to assist this major literacy thrust. The North American, Canadian and Saskatchewan scenes are examined and the wider issue of illiteracy is also looked at in an historical perspective. What exists in Saskatchewan and the conclusions/implications which arise lead to a number of proposals and an implementation strategy. The

proposals involve: specialization, professionalism, flexibility of programs, marketing, program integration, counselling, and recognition of programs. The major proposals are as follows:

1. **The Literacy Council** will have a three-part mandate: (1) to launch and oversee a volunteer-based literacy campaign; (2) to improve the marketing strategies of a more integrated, accessible range of programs and support from regional colleges, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, and libraries; and (3) to encourage the development of literacy initiatives by the corporate and public sector. This Council will be dependent on wide support from volunteers, institutions and the public. The background given in this paper will point to the necessity for wide support and sustained effort from all concerned, and proposes that interest groups be encouraged to make representation to the Council.

2. Develop rural/neighbourhood **COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRES** to offer part-time user-pay and full-time user-pay ABE levels as well as to co-ordinate a homestudy program and provide drop-in/seminar service for GED preparation. The centres will have community-based support and community input to marketing, support, and areas of curriculum development.

3. Enhance the **professionalism of CORE ABE** programs in regional colleges and the Institute to ensure that programs with vocational content, classes for the learning disabled, programs in Life

Skills/Job Skills/Native Life Skills are at a level of excellence for those students.

4. **Develop standards and consistency** in ABE curricula utilizing the Essential Learnings concept in K-12 programs. The three grade XII programs of this province (GED, ABE and K-12) should be clearly comparable in their outcomes. In this way, students, employers and post-secondary institutions alike will clearly know the comparative value and purpose of each. This step should lead to fuller acceptance of ABE and GED by post-secondary institutions/employers.

5. **Improved program integration** among ABE, GED and literacy tutoring, together with the K-12 system, needs to be undertaken by colleges, the Institute of Applied Science and Technology, schools, libraries and volunteer literacy groups to ensure that adult students are offered basic education as a planned, consistent program on a part-time and/or full-time basis under the direction of the Department of Education.

Glossary of Terms Used

- "Illiteracy": refers to the inability to read or write.

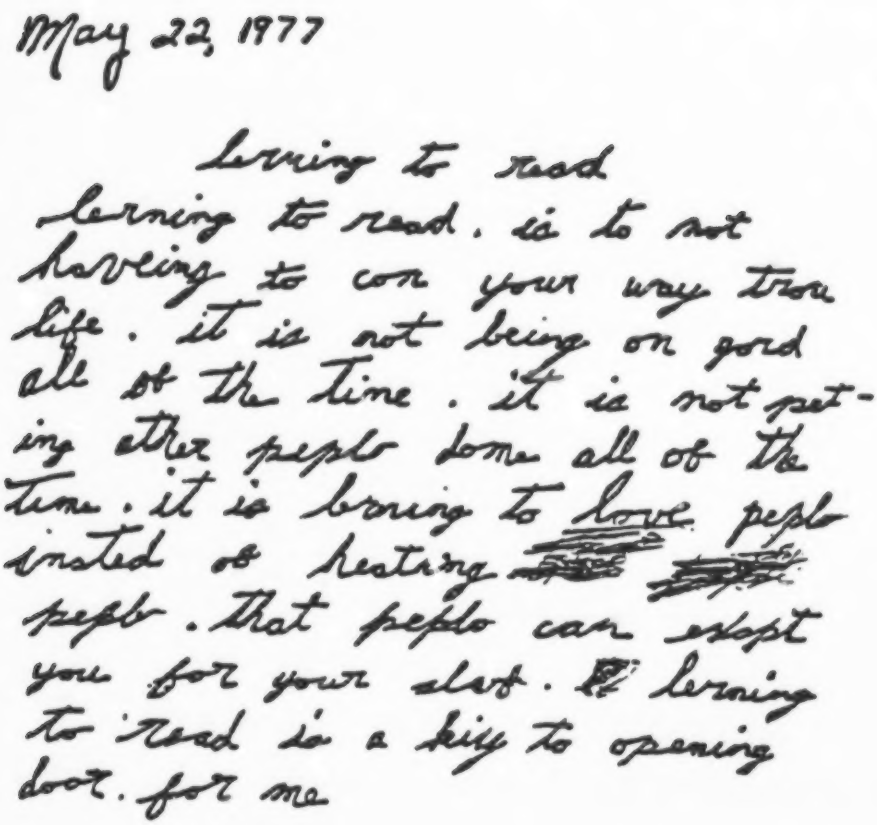
- "Functional illiteracy": widely recognized in Canada to mean less than grade IX (e.g., CAAE, 1975; Statistics Canada, 1981). Other definitions of the term relate to specific functions (e.g., APL, 1975), while others place it in a social/cultural context (e.g., UNESCO, 1975; Harmon and Hunter, 1975). This paper uses the Canadian "less than grade IX" definition, for reasons discussed in the text.

- "Undereducated": used in the literature (e.g., Thomas, 1983) to refer to less than grade twelve.

- Adult Basic Education ("ABE"): typically federal and/or provincial government sponsored programs for adults, providing "grade levels" 1-12 with provincial certification at the senior (X, XI, XII) levels. Delivered through regional colleges and the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology in Saskatchewan, based on curricula approved and monitored by The Department of Education.

- General Education Development Tests ("GED"): a set of standardized challenge exams providing high school equivalency certification by the province at the senior (X, XI, XII) levels. Delivered through regional colleges and the Institute. Based on tests

norm-referenced and delivered in contract with the GED Testing Centre, Washington, D.C. Used by ten Canadian provinces and territories.



May 22, 1977

Lerning to read

Lerning to read. is to not
haveing to con your way thro
life. it is not being on gard
all of the time. it is not get-
ing other peple done all of the
time. it is boreing to love peple
instead of hateing peple. that peple can exept
you for your self. Lerning
to read is a key to opening
door. for me

Written by a 28-year-old man in northwestern Vermont who was learning basic literacy skills with the help of a volunteer tutor (cited in Eberle and Robinson, 1980, p.iii).

I. EXAMINING THE ISSUE

The Literature and the Definitions

Looking at the literature, Arlene Fingeret (1983) noted that "perhaps part of the problem is that once we recognize the inadequacies inherent in our approach to illiterate adults, we have little to offer in its place" (p.133). It is not difficult to identify "inadequacies" in North American literacy and ABE programs. The research literature itself is less than helpful. For instance, Fingeret (1984) examined "literally thousands of microfiche and journal article references" through extensive ERIC searches, concluding that the literature on literacy and undereducation is "voluminous" (p.3). However, she added that this is mainly an "image" of a substantive and useful knowledge base: "a glance through an extensive bibliography ... leaves the reader immersed in acronyms and discrete, site-specific reports that are difficult to relate to each other or to the planning of future efforts" (p.3).

Fingeret organized the current literature into a four-category framework:

1. Formal research studies, both quantitative and, to a much lesser extent, qualitative. These address such areas as the characteristics of the student population; the extent of illiteracy; the nature of the learning-to-read process; and

evaluation of specific instructional approaches, instructional materials and program development strategies.

2. Informal accounts of experiences in developing programs, teaching adults how to read, designing materials, and engaging in other activities pertinent to adult literacy education.
3. How-to manuals and guides designed for instructors, literacy program administrators, program developers, or volunteers that are based upon formal research findings to varying extents.
4. Theoretical and philosophical articles exploring some of the underlying assumptions, values, and beliefs about adult literacy and illiteracy; the relationship between illiteracy and other "social problems;" approaches to programming and instruction; and other relevant issues.

The fourth category, which should provide a base for future directions, Fingeret found to be "by far the smallest category" (p.6). It is also "dominated by academicians and international and community-based literacy educators" (p.6). She found that this category "remains largely unincorporated into the bulk of the literature produced for practitioners" (p.6).

The "big picture" or "long-term" has not seen a sustained effort for literacy and basic education programs, policies, funding or campaign efforts in North America (Smith, 1977; Anderson & Niemi, 1970; Kozol, 1985). In fact, the larger picture of literacy and basic education is usually lost in the interests of short-term "fix-it solutions" which rarely fulfill their own goals.

This discussion paper will look at the key aspects of this issue, beginning with a proposed definition and rationale and ending with a number of options for the future. It is noted at the outset, however, that a sustained effort across many agencies and systems will be the minimum requirement if illiteracy and undereducation are to be seriously affected in Saskatchewan.

What is "Illiteracy"?

Mechanistic and ad hoc "solutions" to the literacy issue in North America have created a lack of agreement on what literacy actually is. Two groups have emerged in this discussion: those who take a community-developmental or "sociological" position who argue for a contextual description of illiteracy, and those who seek a quantification definition. William S. Gray and UNESCO provided an influential definition in 1965 along the sociological lines.

A person is functionally literate "when he has acquired the knowledge and skills in reading and writing which enable him to engage effectively in all those activities in which literacy is normally assumed in his culture or group" (cited in Cervero, 1985, p.51).

While attractive from a perspective which recognizes the complexities of society, this definition obscures "measurement" with phrases such as, "to engage <u>effectively</u>", "<u>all</u> those <u>activities</u>," and "<u>normally</u> <u>assumed</u>."

The criticism of this type of definition is that it defies quantification or measurement for traditional program and policy purposes.

Efforts in the opposite direction have not provided a definitive answer either. In 1973-74, the Adult Performance Level (APL) tests developed in Texas promised to test literacy functions against societal competency expectations. As stated in the 1973 report on the APL test: "The APL study is an attempt to define 'functional' literacy in terms of observable behaviours on certain skills relating to a set of needs which have been tentatively identified as being important to 'success' in adult life" (cited in Fischer et al. p.66). While this is not the first attempt to quantify literacy by skill level in North America nor the only measurement which later translated into competency-based programs, it is easily the most extensive of this type in North America. Based on 65 general APL objectives, the undereducated were tested and "mapped" according to deficiencies in five knowledge areas: (1) community resources, (2) occupational knowledge, (3) consumer economics, (4) health, (5) government and law. As an outcome of the APL test surveys, the 1973-74 sample found that 20% of adults in the U.S. lacked "proficiency" at "level 2" -- meaning "functionally incompetent."

The APL project has since been abandoned in all but two or three states. The measurement criteria for "success" and the nature of the tests were so culturally based on white, middle-class, male-oriented norms that the outcomes were skewed against those who performed "poorly" on unfamiliar grounds (Fischer et al. p.67).

Thus, any definition must take a particular position based on interpretations of what constitutes "need." This observation is not unique to literacy. "Regular school" systems are in constant states of revision based on either changing societal demands and expectations and/or the evolving field of education itself, as "need" is defined and redefined.

It is apparent that applying any definition to literacy will carry an inherent limitation but, perhaps more important, a workable definition needs to indicate what it expects to achieve. The hope of government and the post-secondary education system (as documented at the Leadership 2000 Conference, October 22, 23, 24, 1986) is to alleviate the losses -- human, economic, and societal -- that are often associated with illiteracy and undereducation. To accomplish this, a benchmark for quantification is needed, even if it runs the risk of being criticized at the scientific and sociological levels. Unless the problem can be quantified, the chances of measuring progress on a provincial basis are severely reduced.

The statistical base for Statistics Canada is set at less than grade IX for functional illiteracy. Since various adult education organizations (such as the Canadian Association for Adult Education) and several provinces accept "less than grade IX" as a working definition to depict "functional illiteracy," and since this definition also equates with a publicly understood system of K-12 schooling, it is proposed here **that less than grade IX be the accepted definition for "functional illiteracy" for adults in Saskatchewan. In addition, "illiteracy" is**

widely accepted to refer to an inability to read or write and it is proposed that this be an accepted term as well. "Undereducation" is often referred to as meaning "less than grade XII" and is a generic term used for purposes of this paper.

Size and Scope of the Problem

How Large is the Problem in Saskatchewan?

The level of total illiteracy, the inability to read or write, is taken to be around 1,000,000 adults in Canada. In 1981, Statistics Canada reported that 21.9% of the adult (over-15-years) population in Canada had less than grade IX. In Canada, 4,069,190, adults were "functionally illiterate" (see Table I). If Saskatchewan is compared to this "national norm," it stands at 24.7% (177,075) of the over-fifteen population as functionally illiterate -- somewhat higher than the national norm.

As Table I indicates, Saskatchewan has the highest level of adult functional illiteracy in Western Canada. As for total grade XII graduates, the 1981 statistics indicate that Saskatchewan and Manitoba are virtually identical at 69.1% and 69.2% respectively with all others at much higher rates, with the exception of the North West Territories at 53.7%.

On a more localized level, the 1976 census showed that Saskatoon had 19,010 adults or 21.6% of its over-15-year population with less than

Table I

Population 15 Years and Over[1], Showing Highest Level of Schooling, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1971, 1976 and 1981.

Province	Census year	Non-inmate population 15 years and over		Highest level of schooling					
				Less than Grade 9		Grades 9-13		University degree	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Canada	1971	15,052,530	100.0	5,014,620	33.3	8,319,140	61.9	718,775	4.8
	1976	16,890.350	100.0	4,505,865	26.7	11,298,110	65.9	1,086,370	6.5
	1981	18,609,285	100.0	4,069,190	21.9	13,049,920	70.1	1,490,185	8.0
Nfld.	1971	326,810	100.0	146,775	44.9	173,080	53.0	6,955	2.1
	1976	367,185	100.0	137,685	37.5	215,955	58.8	13,545	3.7
	1981	396,485	100.0	125,550	31.7	252,475	63.7	18,460	4.7
P.E.I.	1971	75,410	100.0	28,475	37.8	44,520	59.0	2,405	3.2
	1976	83,775	100.0	25,585	30.5	53,910	64.4	4,280	5.1
	1981	90,825	100.0	22,905	25.2	62,415	68.7	5,505	6.1
N.S.	1971	544,135	100.0	176,220	32.4	345,400	63.5	22,510	4.1
	1976	598,425	100.0	155,230	25.9	407,365	68.1	35,830	6.0
	1981	641,495	100.0	140,845	22.0	453,395	70.7	47,255	7.4
N.B.	1971	428,605	100.0	181,305	42.3	232,760	54.3	14,540	3.4
	1976	478,600	100.0	167,250	34.9	288.355	60.2	23,000	4.8
	1981	515,945	100.0	155,195	30.1	329,635	63.9	31,115	6.0
Que.	1971	4,208,270	100.0	1,778,720	42.3	2,236,550	53.1	193,000	4.5
	1976	4,628,825	100.0	1,573,035	34.0	2,803,055	60.6	252,725	5.5
	1981	4,975,830	100.0	1,411,265	28.4	3,213,700	64.6	350,860	7.1
Ont.	1971	5,441,965	100.0	1,583,340	29.1	3,572,705	65.6	285,920	5.3
	1976	5,117,135	100.0	1,437,245	23.5	4,228,670	68.1	451,220	7.4
	1981	5,649,725	100.0	1,282,760	19.3	4,769,115	71.7	597,855	9.0
Man.	1971	594,910	100.0	229,315	33.0	432,565	62.4	32,005	4.6
	1976	747,005	100.0	205,125	27.5	493,875	66.1	48,005	6.4
	1981	775,940	100.0	182,330	23.5	536,000	69.1	57,610	7.4
Sask	1971	639,185	100.0	232,165	36.3	384,370	60.1	22,550	3.5
	1976	652.945	100.0	198,655	30.0	432,355	65.2	31,930	4.8
	1981	718,035	100.0	177,075	24.7	496,935	69.2	44,030	6.4
Alta.	1971	1,098,375	100.0	272,805	24.8	765,445	69.7	60,120	5.5
	1976	1,316,485	100.0	248,585	18.9	959,205	73.6	98,695	7.5
	1981	1,672,620	100.0	239,140	14.3	1,273,485	76.1	160,000	9.5
B.C.	1971	1,563,099	100.0	372,370	23.8	1,113,275	71.2	77,440	5.0
	1976	1,848,610	100.0	343,800	18.6	1,380,210	74.7	124,600	6.7
	1981	2,125,735	100.0	318,080	15.0	1,533,870	76.9	173,790	8.2
Yukon	1971	12,000	100.0	2,995	25.0	8,525	71.0	480	4.0
	1976	15,290	100.0	2.840	18.5	11,460	75.0	990	6.5
	1981	16,990	100.0	2,490	14.5	12,980	76.4	1,520	8.9
N.W.T.	1971	19,780	100.0	10,125	51.2	8,920	45.1	735	3.7
	1976	26,075	100.0	10,840	41.6	13,685	52.5	1,555	6.0
	1981	29,665	100.0	11,565	39.0	15,920	53.7	2,180	7.4

[1]Excluding Inmates.

grade IX; Regina had 21.0% of its population deemed functionally illiterate with 21,320 adults having less than Grade IX.

In summary, this province has almost a quarter of its over-15 (not in school) population with less than grade IX, and almost one-third with less than grade XII, or "undereducated," by today's standards.

Some qualification is needed on this, however. First, in a province only four generations old with escalating educational requirements, it must be remembered that seniors, for instance, are quickly deemed "functionally illiterate" by these definitions and statistics. Many successful farmers, businessmen and women -- people in every walk of life -- have low levels of formal education. Does this necessarily mean they have a problem? If so, how extensive is it and what is the nature of the "problem"? Further, the schooling retention rate in Saskatchewan for the "under-15" age group is improving. In 1986, for instance, 80% of the youth who were in school in Grade 2 in 1976 were still in school ten years later. Thus, schooling levels are improving. The "raw data" given needs more consideration, as follows.

Who is Affected and How?

Numbers do not express well or portray an image of who is affected in the illiteracy/undereducation question. To place this aspect of the issue into a framework, Harmon and Hunter (1980) provide a useful categorization of illiterate adults ranging from those who are "functionally illiterate" but are working and living successfully in the

mainstream, through to those who have been termed society's "invisible poor." This framework provides a way of not stereotyping all those "caught" in our definitions.

Group 1: Those who have dropped out of school for personal reasons -- family support needs, pregnancy, illness, disinterest in school -- around the grade 8-10 levels but who are otherwise at ease with formal and informal learning programs as adults. Most are regularly employed, most are upwardly mobile. Theirs is essentially a credential problem. Since they are typically in society's mainstream, they are "embarrassed" by their lack of a diploma. Given challenge exams, short refresher or developmental classes, they normally pass if they make a serious attempt.

Group 2: Those with more serious educational deficiencies are described in this group as those who have much more severe academic shortcomings than the above. Some never learned to read or write at all, and most dropped out of school much earlier than those in Group One. They nevertheless find themselves part of a socio-economic group where literacy is taken for granted. They often marry a literate spouse.

Far from "embarrassment," they simply cannot perform certain tasks and many live in fear of being "found out". This group will often go to great pains to hide their problem with "lost glasses," "headaches," even an arm in a sling at crucial

moments to avoid having to admit they cannot read or write. This group is the subject of many "success" stories in the media. They feel like "frauds" in their socio-economic level and suffer because of it.

Group 3: This group has multiple problems. Often living in the poverty-ridden areas of the city or poor rural area/communities, their lack of credentials and skills is exacerbated by their painful memories of school -- either as having been "victimized" or memories of school as having been utterly unacceptable for their cultural value systems. These adults often drop out of ABE or similar programs. Typically, job-training classes have more appeal, but the academic side of such courses often block their efforts. This group is also comprised of new Canadians who often have a serious language disadvantage in a schooling program. In all, these adults do not "fit" traditional school programs. This may be called the "multiple problem group" and it needs much more understanding and support than the first two if literacy programs and ABE are to be a success with them.

Group 4: This last group's "boundary" blurs with group 3. Many in this fourth group have lost hope in schooling programs and in fact often have stopped hoping that any effort on their part can change their circumstances. Hope can be rekindled in group 3, but the "invisible poor" of group four are much harder to reach. Bureaucracies seem to somehow reinforce their

hard-core poverty. They may be able to make the leap of faith to formal learning but their world view more often tells them it is futile. They often have hope for their children, not for themselves.

Groups 1 and 2, occasionally group 3, are those "creamed off" (Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox, 1975) by traditional ABE programs. Their values and motivation are often sufficiently compatible with the programs as offered. Joining ABE programs does not mean adults stop being members of their particular "categories," however. The approximate 50% attrition rate in Saskatchewan ABE courses (Thomas, 1975) is typically ascribed to "circumstances" inherent to the group's circumstances -- home problems, illness, etc., even though many who drop out do return to ABE, and do so more than once after each exceptional circumstance is overcome.

The sincere commitment of instructors in ABE programs (Mezirow et al., 1975; for Adults only, 1986) provides a second chance to some in the first three groups who enter these classes. However, underfunding, lack of stability, lack of connection to the work force, need for support follow-up groups and networks, and lack of expertise with the learning disabled are all areas that have been identified as needing attention in traditional ABE programs (eg. Saskatchewan Final Report on ABE, 1983).

Traditional ABE programs reached only 6,099 adults in 1985-86 (1985-86 Annual Report). Saskatchewan has, by 1981 statistics, 177,075 with less than grade IX. About 3.4 % of the target group was reached. This can

be compared with the 1983 national participation rate whereby 5% of those with less than grade IX took a course (CAAE, 1985). Later in this discussion, it will be proposed that innovative programs will be needed to involve more among the entire target group. It will be suggested that, in fact, current ABE programs are most appropriate to group 2 and, it will be suggested, more can be achieved in every group with innovation on the part of those involved in this field and those associated with the problems involved.

Before discussing changes, it is worth looking at some "estimates" of the loss to society and to individual human dignity to gain a perspective on the value of doing a better job in this area.

Economic Loss

Loss in dollars through illiteracy and undereducation is impossible to calculate with any precision. However, a few of the areas which need to be considered in this respect are as follows:

Employment: Only 1/3 of those with less than grade IX (17 years of age and over) were employed as of June 1985 (see Table II, CAAE 1985). Saskatchewan experienced similar statistics in 1985 (see Table III) with this group. Saskatchewan saw approximately 35% of those with less than grade IX employed. The remaining unemployed were classed as 60% not in the labour force, or "not seeking work," and 5% were classed as actually

"unemployed." Thus, the undereducated and functionally illiterate are a major factor in the work force issue.

Table II
EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED ADULTS

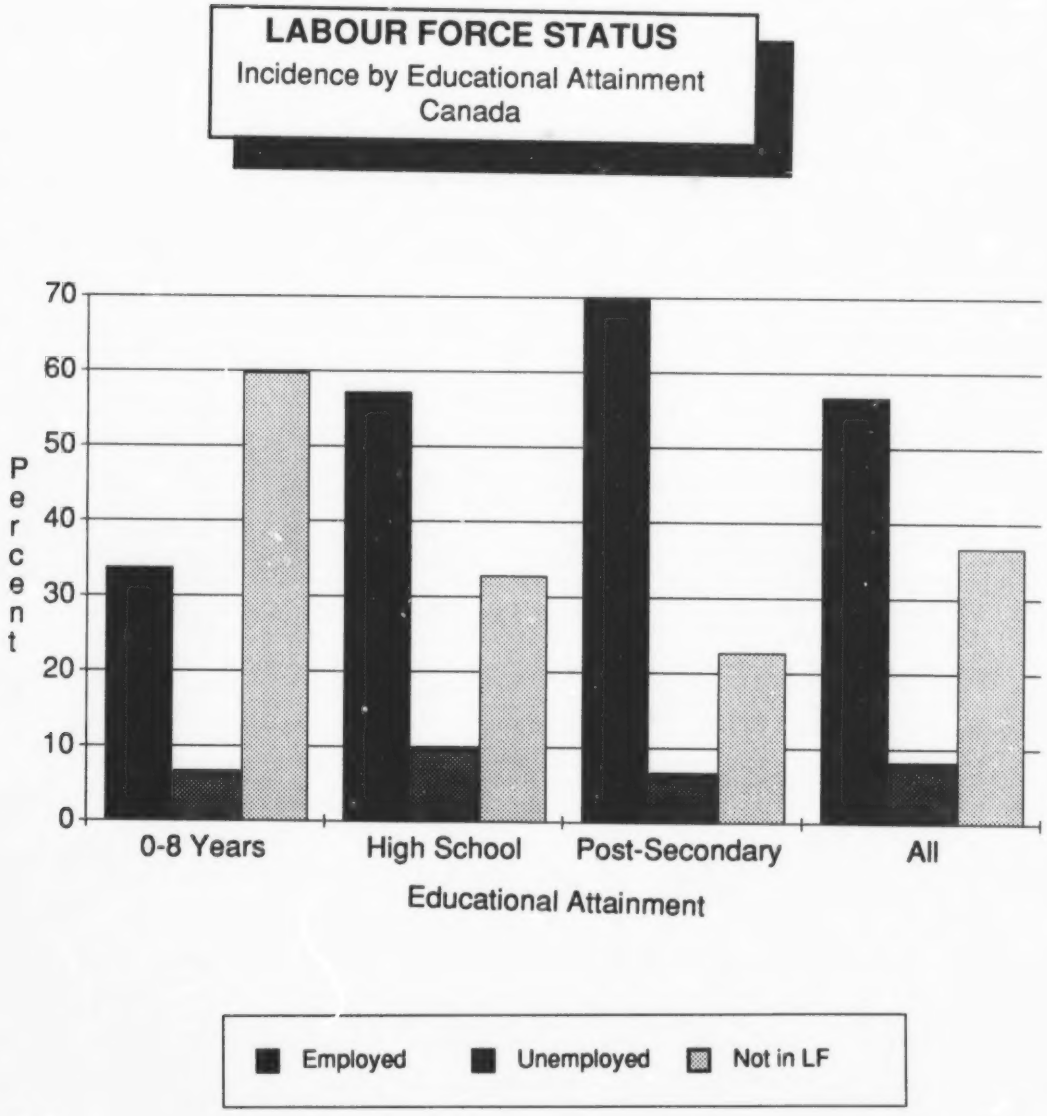
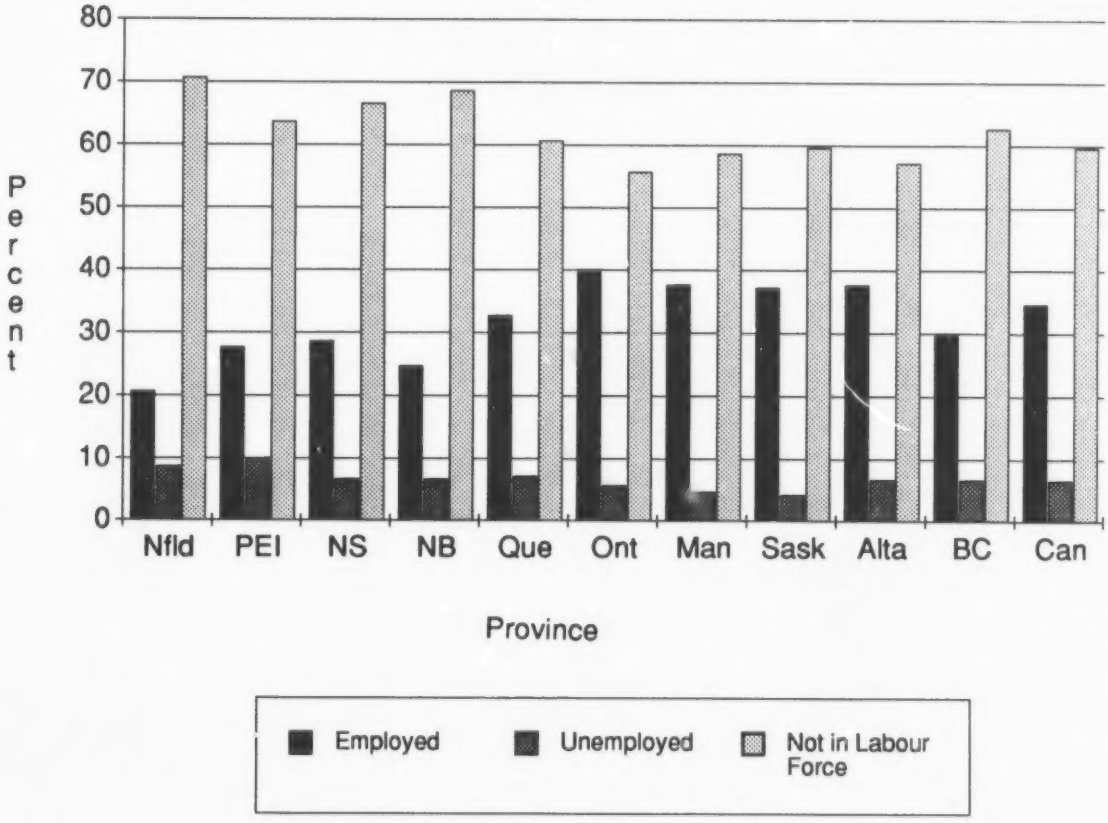


Table III
EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED ADULTS

LABOUR FORCE STATUS
of Persons with 0-8 Years Educational Attainment
Incidence by Province



As noted in the Reader's Digest (Taylor, 1987), Gerry Doucet, senior Vice-President of the Retail Council of Canada has discovered that "There are clerks, cashiers, stockkeepers and salespersons who do a good job most of the time -- then we discover they can't read an inventory or fill in a simple form." (p. 112). The president of a recent Canadian Business Task Force in Literacy, Janet Turnbull, found: "Businesses realize the problem is real as soon as they find it is costing them money." (p. 112).

Wastage, loss, injuries on the job, duplication of effort, lost taxes, social assistance, unemployment insurance, and the costs of numerous social supports have all been associated with illiteracy and undereducation to some degree (see Table IV). To go even further, levels of illiteracy and functional illiteracy in correctional centres exceed 50% (Saskatchewan Interim Report, 1983) -- over half the inmate population has less than ninth grade.

Thus, the economic costs are high when 25% of society has less than grade IX. To assume that a grade X, XI, or XII education will immediately "cure" all of the socio-economic problems associated with undereducation is overly-simplistic. Still, the odds of those with less than IX "competing" in today's job market are also extremely limited. Those who want a chance to be employed, or stay employed, need higher credentials and/or skills. The need for a more highly educated, self-reliant, population able to cope with change into the next century is all too obvious.

Table IV

Population (15 years and over), Not Attending School, Full Time, Showing Level of Schooling by Income Bracket, 1981 Census

INCOME CATEGORY	SASKATCHEWAN POPULATION 15 YEARS AND OVER	LESS THAN GRADE 5 (% of the column)	GRADES 5-8	GRADES 9-12*
Total Indiv. Income	639,795 100%	27,875 4.36%	132,260 20.83%	267,470 41.81%
Negative Income	3,535 0.55%	30 0.11%	795 0.60%	1,475 0.55%
Less than $5,000	219,655 34.32%	13,985 50.17%	55,380 41.56%	99,225 37.10%
$5,000 to $9,999	132,080 20.64%	10,115 36.29%	35,500 26.64%	51,650 19.31%
$10,000 to $16,999	124,410 19.45%	2,120 7.61%	20,555 15.42%	55,200 20.64%
$17,000 to $24,999	87,220 13.63%	895 3.21%	11,640 8.73%	34,370 12.85%
$25,000 to $39,999	54,755 8.56%	540 1.94%	6,460 12.35%	19,045 7.12%
$40,000 +	18,140 2.68%	180 0.65%	2,930 2.20%	6,515 2.44%

* Note: Includes Persons <u>WITH</u> Secondary School Certificates.

The aggregate costs of programs, unemployment, underemployment, lost taxes, wastage and loss in everyday work life have not been estimated for Saskatchewan. If they were, the results would undoubtedly be staggering. If those from the United States are comparable, with between 23 million functionally illiterate and 46 million affected by undereducation, the estimate is an annual cost of $20 billion to U. S. taxpayers and businesses (Kozol, 1985), $6 billion to welfare and unemployment, $6.6 billion for prison maintenance, and at least $20 billion in industrial and tax expenditures in the U.S. -- at least $52.6 billion annually before such estimates as court costs, on-site accidents and health costs are added (Kozol, 1985).

Human Cost

The experiences of illiterate and undereducated adults have been well documented. The experiences of the hard-to-reach groups 3 and 4 are less often captured in the literature. Instead, the experiences of group 2 are more typically reflected in the literature. Looking at a number of direct quotes from those illiterate adults who have been willing to be interviewed, a common theme is the inability to cope. The following are direct quotes from a phone-in line conducted in Vermont as part of a literacy tutoring project:

"Curtis"
Well, right off the bat, if somebody can't read, people instamatically figure that he's stupid, or that he's dumb or that there's something wrong with him mentally. And the major reason why I don't want to be called by

my regular name is, I guess you'd call it: fear. Not being able to read is 20th century leprosy, is what it is, because people treat you different. Like if my boss would find out, I'd lose a lot of credit in his eyes. I've told friends. After I tell my friends, the next thing I know, they go out of their way to explain things to me, they start pointing this out to me that they didn't use to point out to me. Maybe you won't understand that. Let me explain it to you. Before you know it, you're being treated as a kid, as half what you used to be treated. That's the major reason why I'm staying as Mr. X. (Eberle and Robinson, 1980, p.2).

"Annabelle"
It makes it harder when you don't have a license. I could use it. There have been more times if I had a license, I could use it. You keep depending onto somebody to take you here or depend on somebody to go somewhere or something like that, and you feel like they could be doing something else. Or it ends up they feel sorry for you. Really, sometimes they want to do it, but not all the time. They got their own families, they have their own life to live. When you have to depend on somebody all the time, to doing something like that for you, it makes it harder for them, it makes it harder for you. I like to try to do things for myself if I can, and if I can't, why, I depend on somebody. (Cole, 1976, p. 191).

"Ernie"
As far as reading, I think the biggest hassle if you can't read is not working. If you're not working and you got to go out and try to find a job, well, what I do is go down and get an application. "Can I make these out later and drop them back?" And if they say, "No, you have to make them out here," well, I say, "I have a problem reading and I can`t make it out." He says, "You can't make the application out?" I say, "No." "Well," he says, "well, we aren't hiring right now," or "I don't have time to make out the application with you," or something like this. And that was the story most of the time. It's a real hassle just going into a place and trying, just knowing that you are going to have to make out an application, hoping you can go in someplace and take out and bring it back. "Ernie" (Cole, 1976, p.46).

"Curtis"
Like I said before, I was married. I have two kids. What do I do if one of my kids starts choking and I go running to the phone? Nine times out of ten, I can't

> *look up the phone number of the hospital. That's if we're at home. Like if we're out on the street, nine times out of ten I can't read the street. If I should get to a pay phone, and they say, ok, tell us where you are, we'll send an ambulance. I look at the street sign. Right there, I couldn't tell you what the name was, I'd have to spell it letter for letter. By that time, one of my kids could be dead. These are the kinds of fears you go with every single day of your life, and you can't tell anybody. (Eberle and Robinson, 1980, p.11).*

> "Ginny"
> *The only real problem it brings up is reading to the boys. I can't read to them, and, of course, that's leaving them out of something they should have. It bothers you if you can't read, and if you can't read to your boys, it bothers you more. Oh, it matters, you believe it matters. I ordered all these books. The kids belong to a book club, they got them that way. They know I can't read because it made me feel funny one day. Donny wanted me to read a book to him and Matthew, and I told Donny, I said, "I can't read." Well, he said, "Mommy, you sit down and I'll read to you." Donny does fine on reading. I tried it one day reading from the pictures, and Donny looked at me and he said, "Mommy, that's not right." And he's only 5, so he knew I couldn't read from the pictures. "Ginny" (Cole, 1976, pp.60-61).*

Clearly, there is an incalculable degree of human suffering associated with illiteracy and undereducation. To put the "value" of literacy and educational skills into a quantifiable form is impossible, but the 1975 Declaration of Persepolis comes close to expressing the power of literacy for individuals and society in the following:

> [Literacy is] not just the process of learning the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, but a contribution to the liberation of man and to his full development. Thus conceived, literacy creates the conditions for the acquisition of a critical consciousness of the contradictions of society in which man lives and of its aims; it also stimulates initiative and his participation in the creation of projects capable of acting upon the world, of

> transforming it, and of defining the aims of an authentic human development. It should open the way to a mastery of techniques and human relations: (cited in Thomas, 1983, p.16).

However, undereducation and illiteracy are far from recent phenomena. These issues must be seen in an historical context if the larger picture of illiteracy is to be understood.

II. THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Illiteracy and undereducation are often seen as phenomena peculiar to the last thirty to forty years -- possibly because they have gained increasing publicity as an issue since World War II in Canada. In fact, illiteracy is a centuries-old problem with a number of themes relevant for today.

The first recorded school for adults was in Bristol, England in 1814 as established by William Smith. It was intended to teach adults to read for the express purpose of reading the scriptures. The 17th and 18th century efforts to teach literacy skills were typically motivated by religious zeal. Verner (1973) has noted that the Adult School Movement "grew out of evangelism among members of the minor sects that were becoming prominent at the time and out of genuine philanthropy arising from the newly developed middle class spawned by the industrial revolution" (p.9). Through time, illiteracy was associated with poverty

and since poverty was seen as entrenched in sin, "sin was associated almost exclusively with illiteracy, yet there was little evidence that literacy eradicated sin" (p.11).

These early sentiments are of value today since it is apparent that the 20th century has tended to carry a tradition of adding wide-scale social and psychological expectations to the acquisition of relatively straightforward cognitive skills.

This point has been taken up by researchers as well, such as Harvey Graff (1979). Entering the 20th century in England and America, Graff notes that "literacy could not be promoted or comprehended in isolation from morality" (p.25). Morality was defined as: "A mode of conduct and a way of life: habits, values, attitudes, which were (and are) based on the cultural necessities of progress and the requirements of society" (p.25).

Since the societal perception of what can be achieved through literacy has often gone well beyond simple reading/writing skill development, many of the 19th and 20th century literacy campaigns have understandably failed to fulfil their promise. Today's ABE critics internal to the field (e.g., Fingeret, 1983, 1984; O'Brien, 1979; Thompson, 1980) have taken the position that ABE must begin to focus on the needs of the adult learners more, and less on unrealistic expectations for "social change."

The concept of illiteracy as a state of deficiency out of a "deficit perspective" is understandable if long-standing, underlying assumptions are seen. As Fingeret (1983) has concluded, one assumption has been that "educators believe that literacy is fundamental to competence and independence in modern society: it is difficult for us to conceptualize life without reading and writing as anything other than a limited, dull, dependent existence" (p.133). As a result, there has been an historic tendency to perceive illiterate and undereducated student populations in terms of inability and incompetence. North American ABE programs have tended to focus on "deficiencies": motivational deficiencies, deficiencies in personal values, and intellectual deficiencies. This has restricted the types of options made available to adults in North America to "remedial" education for adults and tended to ignore adult learner input. Programs have typically been designed "for them" -- as if there was a sweeping homogenity to the undereducated and illiterate populace. This, some have argued, (eg. Fingeret, 1983) has tended to limit ABE to those willing to "admit deficiency" and, consequently, has alienated many adults who might otherwise have enrolled in an ABE program.

The conclusion is that single-system, blanket program "answers" have not and cannot serve nearly 1/3 of the North American population -- over 30,000,000 adults -- with any singular success. The group in question is far less homogeneous (Fingeret, 1984; Hunter and Harmon, 1979) than is often assumed.

Despite the fact that most regular K - 12 schooling or post-secondary systems have, through time, structured some types of alternative delivery modes, for reasons of perspective, funding, and lack of research, the evidence is that ABE has tended to have been treated in a simplistic, program-oriented, even mechanistic manner.

However, before discussing the possibility of an appropriate range of services, it is necessary to see what does exist in Saskatchewan.

III. WHAT CURRENTLY EXISTS

Basic Literacy (Grades 1-4)

In Saskatchewan, literacy training is offered in the regional colleges, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, the Regina Public Library and various volunteer groups. Since the federal Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) discontinued sponsorship to literacy classes in ABE, basic literacy (Grades 1 to 4) programs have been funded with grants from the Department of Education (previously Advanced Education and Manpower) to regional colleges and to some of the volunteer groups such as READ Saskatoon.

Volunteer groups use a tutorial approach to teaching literacy with tutors and students being matched by a coordinator. Instruction is given from three to six hours per week as agreed on by the tutor and the student. These are successful to a point, but it needs to be noted

that, according to professional literacy teachers, true proficiency in reading can take up to two years of study and practice for adults.

Although it is not well advertised, many regional colleges have offered literacy programs on a full-time and part-time basis through time. Students have attended night classes, day classes, or visited drop-in learning centres to follow individual study courses. As for materials used for basic literacy, regional college instructors and volunteer agency instructors use resources developed by themselves and/or suitable commercial materials such as those from the Literacy Volunteers of America or Laubach tutoring systems. For the programs beyond literacy, regional college instructors follow the Department of Education's mathematics and communications Adult Basic Education curriculum guides (1983). Unfortunately, there is often dislocation between literacy tutoring and ABE courses. The two years of steady practice and study often lacks follow-through and is typically extremely disjointed.

The Number of Programs

Five of sixteen community colleges (now regional colleges) have been delivering adult Grade levels 1-4 in academic adult basic education programs. There are typically from 12 to 15 students at one time in these. READ Saskatoon, a volunteer organization, has averaged 124 students per year and the Regina Public Library has been matching approximately 90 students with tutors at any given time in 1986-87 (approximately half of this library group is comprised of new Canadians).

Based on these figures, a projection can be made that some 600 students functioning at a Grade 4 level or lower receive some form of literacy instruction per year in Saskatchewan. Assuming all of these students attain a literacy level of Grade 4, they would represent less than 1% (.34%) of the functionally illiterate population (177,075) in Saskatchewan. However, basic literacy tutoring is not the entire program offered to adults in Saskatchewan.

For those functioning above the fourth grade level, i.e., above basic literacy, regional colleges offer a variety of Adult Basic Education classes at levels 5-10 and levels 11-12. Students enrolled in Adult Basic Education "academic" classes follow the 1983 ABE curriculum guides for communications, mathematics, science and social studies. Those who complete the courses and test successfully in reading, mathematics and communications (on the standardized Canadian Test of Basic Skills) are eligible for an Adult Grade X certificate issued by the Department of Education (previously Advanced Education and Manpower). Certificates at the 11 and 12 levels from Saskatchewan Education are based on ABE 11-12 "teacher-made" tests.

In March of 1987 there were 51 mainly continuous intake adult basic education programs being offered in community/regional colleges in Saskatchewan. They were attended fully or in part by students working toward an ABE Grade 10 certificate. Approximately 2,300 students are enrolled in those classes at any given time in the academic year. Most of these students are referred and sponsored by agencies such as CEIC or the Non-status Indian Metis program. The occasional fee-payer attends as well. The cumulative total is estimated at 5,500 per year in 5-10 ABE.

Thus, volunteer tutoring together with ABE classes for the functionally illiterate might involve as much as 3.1% of the illiterate and functionally illiterate target group per year in this province. The Adult 11 and 12 classes in a number of colleges would add possibly another 500 per year, bringing the Saskatchewan total to some 6,000 adults involved in literacy to Grade XII adult classes annually. Compared with the 215,410 without a Grade XII, this is a 2.8% participation rate at this level.

In addition to adult basic education programs, all Saskatchewan regional colleges conduct GED tests (General Educational Development) for those who wish to test for high school equivalency at the X, XI or XII levels. Some regional colleges and the Regina Public Library offer pre-GED preparatory classes. Others may be assisted in drop-in learning centres at colleges which have such facilities. It is important to note that the GED tests are not developmental in nature but are "challenge exams."

To summarize this portion, the literacy tutoring and full and part-time ABE programs which develop academic skills must be seen as simply scratching the surface when compared to the size of the problem and the size of the economic and human losses associated with illiteracy and undereducation. As federal funding becomes harder to access, traditional programs seem to be engaged in a "losing battle."

As for the GED program which provides X, XI or XII certification to some 1,000 adults annually, it has never been extensively promoted or

advertised. The reasons for this fact are rather unclear since GED tests are not limited by space capacity. One speculation is that the GED and ABE programs have been implicit "rivals" for clients. In any case, the range of "non-traditional" options available are without continuity and are poorly advertised, exacerbating the lack of coherence across literacy/basic programs.

Who Attends Adult Basic Education, GED, Literacy Tutoring?

The profile of those who attend literacy tutoring, ABE and GED testing varies with the nature of the program and how each program is marketed or how recruitment is conducted. The volunteer literacy classes attract a wide range from all socio-economic groups and all adult age groups. The preponderance are female, non-Native, from lower-income socio-economic levels, often between the ages of 20-30 years. The (infrequent) part-time ABE class that runs on a user-pay fee basis, particularly levels 5-10, typically attracts non-Native/non-immigrant males around 19-25 years of age. The GED tests attract mainly females (Follow-Up Study, 1981) but the age profile is closer to 30 years. They are typically employed with a grade X and are typically non-Native.

The full-time ABE classes which involve referral agencies such as CEIC have a profile of females, particularly, between ages 19-25, with some 60-70% being of Native ancestry. This profile would be much the same for 11-12 ABE classes except with fewer Native students and the mean age closer to 19 than 25.

While research on the above is limited, programs based on voluntary attendance and participation such as literacy and the GED testing service, appeal to the adults from Groups 1 and 2 as discussed earlier -- those "mainstream" adults lacking a credential. Part-time 5-10 ABE, involving user-fees, attracts more males, typically from both groups 1 and 2 as well. Thus, the part-time programs, literacy tutoring, part-time ABE and GED, apparently are compatible with the motivation, values, financial means and "comfort level" of those from the first two groups -- those who are either embarrassed by the lack of a credential or impeded by the lack of skills. Taken together, part-time classes/tests can provide literacy training through to a grade 12 equivalency. They are, however, neither co-ordinated as a "package" or advertised as such. These programs, co-ordinated or not, still do not "fit" the entire target group, however.

The full-time ABE programs involving referral agencies to recruit students engage group 3 and, somewhat less, groups 4 and 2. Although not discussed in this paper, many full-time ABE programs also have life skills and employment readiness class options as well as on-going teacher/counsellor support. Only those programs such as life skills, Native life skills, or courses for the handicapped might be said to involve a fair number of those from group 4. Thus, the more high-support programs of a full-time nature reach a number of the groups 3, 2 and 4 respectively, based largely on the help of referral agencies. The attrition rates of 50% (Thomas, 1975) suggest that these best efforts may not always be enough and that enhancement and innovation are required here to do a more professionalized job.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on this discussion, a number of conclusions emerge which will require the attention of the post-secondary system and Saskatchewan Education as well as other government departments. As a background paper, the intent here is not to bring closure to issues but to identify them and suggest directions for the future.

The issues arising then appear as follows:

A. The Saskatchewan participation rate in traditional and non-traditional literacy and basic education programs is low. It is approximately 3.1% for the less-than-Grade IX (functionally illiterate) target group and 2.8% for the less-than-XII (undereducated) target group. Since Saskatchewan's target group(s) are considerably higher than other Western provinces in virtually every comparison, **it is apparent that increased effort and innovation is needed if Saskatchewan is to involve more adults in acquiring some level of literacy to adult Grade XII.**

B. Broad generalization of attributes to the illiterate, functionally illiterate and undereducated has contributed to an assumed homogeneity among "the undereducated." To reach a complex, heterogeneous proportion of society, a variety of learning opportunities are required. The alternatives which are available are disparate, lack continuity and are not well advertised. **A mix of literacy and basic education programs appears to be needed, but**

marketing to specific target groups would seem to be what is most needed if program offerings are to be effective. The groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 as outlined from Hunter and Harmon would appear to provide a useful framework for marketing Saskatchewan programs.

C. As mentioned above, the various programs being offered today in literacy and basic education have an often overlooked level of alternatives and flexibility in the fact that some colleges offer part-time, user-pay, adult 5-10 and 11-12 classes. The literacy volunteer program is flexible, as is the GED testing program. However, an implicit lack of support and lack of integrated planning among programs, together with very little program advertising, has meant a disjointed effort and public confusion among programs. This is exacerbated by the fact that some programs have gained acceptance by universities, some not; some have "partial acceptance" at institutes, etc. **An integrated, long-term "package" should be made available which is clearly understandable to the public and potential student. It should also be both accessible and relevant to student needs.**

D. To avoid mechanistic "non-solutions," **some level of individual and community input to the process of learning is desirable to ensure on-going feedback.** On the issue of standards and the lack of clarity on program "worth," **an inclusive set of agreed-upon "essential learnings" and maintenance of achievement standards might be built-in between ABE and GED. This level of agreement might parallel the current K-12 process of "common essential**

learnings" in their curriculum to provide K-12/post-secondary continuity. Closer comparisons between the two systems would undoubtedly go a long way to resolving the acceptance of the certification question and would provide a systematic quality control across ABE/GED and grades IX, X, XI, XII.

E. Finally, as the discussion reveals, there is an historic stigma attached to illiteracy and undereducation. Participation in programs by the target group will be enhanced with community and individual involvement, homestudy options, positive marketing campaigns and the involvement of agencies such as libraries. Societal attitudes will be more difficult to alter. The desirable course of action will be to address "basic academic skills" -- not merely learning to read and write. If the lack of basic academic skills, from improved reading through to Grade XII, were the understood thrust, some 30% of the population could be potentially affected and a wider pool of targeted students would blunt the undesirable connotations of "illiteracy" alone.

Implications

If more of the larger target group is to be attracted to literacy and basic education programs, particularly more males, Natives, immigrants, the handicapped -- those on social assistance as well as those who can pay their own way -- it is suggested that the programs offered must be wider in scope and need to penetrate deeper into communities. The first two groups discussed volunteer to learn and need improved access. The

courses to meet their needs require improved marketing, an improved image, and an improved sense of who is to be reached. The proposed initiative to be discussed for this level in the next section will be in the form of a wide campaign for all "non-traditional" programs: literacy tutoring, user-pay classes, GED X, XI, XII. Adults should see that they can obtain literacy through to a GED XII by making a personal commitment to come forward and become involved in part- or full-time programs. They should be able to pay their own way and should be able to come forward without being seen as "deficient". Involvement of local teachers/volunteers/para-professionals from the same socio-economic/cultural environment and community should also be encouraged as part of this effort.

This initiative will require innovative, community-located, education centres, for group 3 especially. As well, enhancement of the professionalism of the core ABE classes in colleges to meet group 4 (and 3) needs and provide back-up is proposed. Thus, community involvement is proposed for group 3 and increased professionalism/specialization for those recruited from groups 4 (and 3) will comprise the thrust proposed at the second broad level of this target group.

V. AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

To enhance participation, a three-pronged campaign is recommended under the auspices of the recently announced Literacy Council:

A. A Basic Education Campaign:

1. First, a provincial Literacy Campaign was announced April 28, 1987 by the Minister of Education, the Honourable Lorne Hepworth. This Campaign will be a joint Saskatchewan Education-Provincial Library thrust with regional colleges and regional/municipal libraries taking the lead. The campaign will no doubt attract the "voluntary" learners from groups 1 and 2, and will be most effective if it is marketed in positive terms rather than focusing on "weaknesses" of illiterate adults. Toll-free telephone numbers, symbol advertising, radio/TV advertising have all been used effectively in the 1985-87 Literacy Coalition Campaign in the U.S.A., by the B.B.C. campaign in Britain and in provinces in Canada such as Ontario and Alberta. Real impact comes with local efforts, however, and the mobilization of local agencies will be critical since local acceptance and enthusiasm is the key.

2. The campaign should also include information on literacy tutoring, part-time user-pay ABE as locally available, home-study (which needs developing), the use of distance education (which needs exploring) and GED testing. Rather than single out illiterates, the campaign can include all levels of adult non-traditional schooling. Levels above illiteracy up to XII equivalency can be advertised if part-time ABE and GED are included.

3. A campaign will be more successful if it utilizes the community resources familiar to the learner (Fingeret, 1983). **Neighbourhood literacy tutors in the local community should be used as much as possible rather then "sending in" tutors (as Fingeret has found, 1983, for every non-reader there is at least one reader helping that person). These "natural tutors" need to be involved where possible. The focus should be on reading, writing and numeracy skills -- not on "rehabilitation" in this campaign. Local libraries can provide support and their resources can be integrated into local plans. Similarly, school boards could provide support and resources.** Increased local cooperation and planning is needed here and a joint campaign will foster some of this on a lasting basis.

To involve those who will complete basic literacy in follow-through programs and reach the many adults who have skills above literacy but below a IX and XII level, institutions will need to involve the community more.

B. <u>Community Education Centres</u>:

To meet the needs of non-participants held back by a lack of skills as well as personal shame or skepticism -- community-based centres should be considered. Such centres would not ignore the social network of the learner, they would depend on the network. These community centres would have community advisory

groups actively involved in curriculum materials and content and local para-professionals operating or supporting the centres. Local instructors wherever possible and para-professional counsellors would also be at these centres. It would be a regional college/institute undertaking with local promotion and local co-ordination. These community-based centres could provide: (1) part-time, (2) full-time classes, (3) homestudy, and (4) a drop-in service. Wherever possible, they would be operated on a user-pay basis. The mission of the centres would be to offer general adult basic education, "upgrading," but the programs would stay true to the common essential learnings and standards across ABE.

Centres would be marketed with a positive image involving the community to support it. The learning, including the materials, would be responsive to local needs, conditions, employment opportunities, etc. GED testing would be promoted by and conducted in the centres, and in general, the centres would be intended to be as flexible and responsive as possible to upgrade community and regional education. They would be marketing toward a motivated target group and steered by local communities. They would look to local libraries for support and tie into local programs.

To address the more complex needs of the adult problem group 3 and those who have virtually lost hope on education, the CORE traditional programs need to be enhanced in their levels of professionalism.

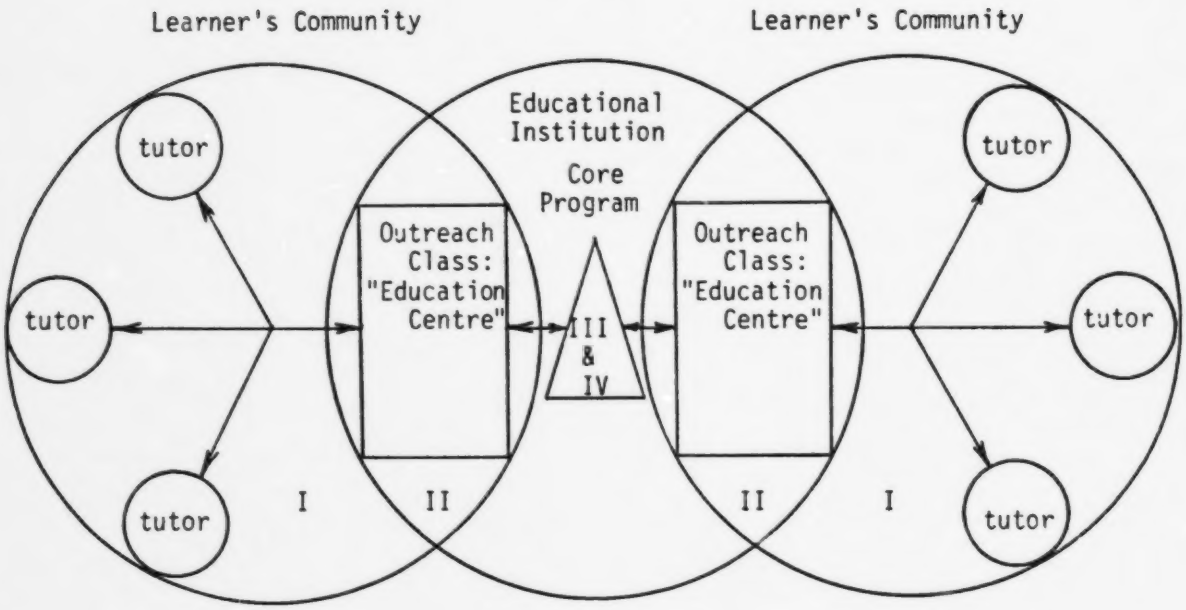
C. **Professionalized CORE Programs**:

An enhanced and more professionalized traditional program in the main centres at colleges or institutes should act as the more specialized hub supportive to both of the above. Here, specialized vocational ABE, assistance to those with learning disabilities, personal skills development such as life skills, professional counselling services, and broad support to the outreach and tutoring thrust should be available. This would be a more professional response to the group 3 and 4 referrals from sponsoring agencies. The overall design would be as shown on the following page.

The approach would be based on levels of instructional "intensity" and the target groups themselves, bringing a literacy-through-level 12 flexible system closer to groups 1 and 2, and a more intensive build-up of professionalism for groups 3 and 4 to meet referral needs.

Looking at the complete model, group 1 and 2 students would be the focus in a literacy to grade 12 campaign using flexible alternatives to traditional ABE. The community centre would be a follow-up for groups 1 and 2 beyond literacy, since it would appeal to those willing and able to come forward. The community programs would offer part-time, mainly cost-recovery classes; a drop-in; and a home-study service. The more traditional, full-time CORE ABE programs in colleges and the Institute would work with those needing specialized training or needing

MODEL FOR INVOLVING FOUR CLIENT GROUPS



Emphasis on Group I	Emphasis on Groups I & II	Emphasis on Groups III & IV
- Literacy tutoring - homestudy assistance on 5-12 classes	- outreach community education centre - counsellor/ information - homestudy mailout centre - part-time 5-12 classes - alternate curricula - drop-in	- full-time 5-12 - vocational stream - learning disability assistance - life skills classes - professionalized staff

specialized assistance in learning. The CORE would work with group 3 and those of group 4 referred by support agencies as its emphasis.

Regional colleges and libraries are a key factor in this new model as both are wide spread community-based systems. Libraries can provide an informal support system where the familiar tutoring materials may be found by the new literate adults, and possibly, special high interest, low reading-level collections can be in the same section as the literacy materials -- forming a "new reader's section." The emphasis must be on reinforcing the reading process in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Success in any of these thrusts should be evaluated on the criteria of participation levels and retention levels, with follow-up studies to determine whether the intended service is actually being provided.

VI. A Concluding Note

It is all too easy to be cynical about the possibilities for success in any literacy or basic education initiative. The goals and targets of campaigns have been missed again and again through history. However, they have rarely been given a fair chance since wide-spread efforts sustained through time are rare. The chance to voluntarily come forward to an alternative, "non-traditional" program cast in a positive, community-responsive image, with options of paying one's own way, either in class or at home, has rarely been available in ABE. Literacy initiatives have rarely been supported with planned follow-up steps, and

integrated options for the graduates are uncommon. CORE or traditional programs have rarely been given the opportunity to specialize or given the support to become truly professionalized.

In the broadest sense, one traditional ABE program, one set of curricula, one model has been expected to meet the diverse needs of close to 30% of the province's undereducated adults. It has worked well for those it has served, but it has been expected to do too much for too many. Public disenchantment and internal research critical of the one-model concept challenges the system and its sponsors to become more innovative. If literacy and ABE do not attempt a New Beginning, today's 30% of adults will fall further and further behind with increasing social and economic consequences.

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